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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

Issue #68

August 22, 1977

ENERGY POLICY AND CONSERVATION.....On July 20, the President signed Executive Order 12003 relating to energy policy and conservation. The policies promulgated deal with motor vehicles and buildings. Key provisions of this Executive Order that amend previous guidelines are as follows:

- The Administrator, General Services, shall promulgate rules which will ensure that the minimum statutory requirement for fleet average fuel economy is exceeded for FY 1978 by 2 miles per gallon, for FY 1979 by 3 miles per gallon, by FY 1980 by 4 miles per gallon.
- The Administrator of the Federal Energy Administration shall establish requirements and procedures to reduce by 20% the average annual energy use per gross square foot of floor area in 1985 from the average energy use per gross square foot in 1975 for all Federally-owned existing buildings. For all Federally-owned new buildings, the reduction shall be 45% for the same period.

In addition, departments and agencies are to develop a ten-year plan for energy conservation in Federal buildings and will submit annual reports on progress made toward achieving the goals established in the overall plan. Each department and agency will submit estimates for implementation of the plan to OMB with the agency's annual budget submission. (Contact: Bill Saltsgaver, 00, ext. 77557)

CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL.....Changes are underway to improve correspondence control in the Department. The aim of this move is to ensure that all mail selected for control is handled in the fastest and most efficient manner possible. However, no more mail than is necessary will be controlled.

Some improvements have already been made. Secretary's Records reduced logging time from several days down to six-hours. Personnel are now on hand until 6:00 p.m. to handle late mailings and to answer inquiries regarding controlled correspondence. Daily courier service to the Senate and House Agriculture Committees and the White House has been initiated. These improvements have resulted in a 16% increase in on-time response to controlled correspondence in the past month.

A pilot project will begin the first week in September with FNS as the first agency. There will be a meeting of Correspondence Control Officers to obtain suggestions for improvement and to preview the pilot project. The development of a Departmental Correspondence Manual will be initiated shortly and all agencies will be invited to participate in the preparation.

The Correspondence Review Section has moved to Room 139-W, and can be reached on extension 75411. (Contact: Betty Stiverson, SEC, ext. 75744)

ARS RECEIVES EXAMINING AUTHORITY FOR LIFE SCIENCES POSITIONS, GS-9-12.....

In the past, the Civil Service Commission maintained registers of eligible candidates for all positions in Life Sciences, GS-5 through GS-15. These positions are covered under Announcement No. 421. Effective August 1, GS-9 through GS-12 research positions in USDA will no longer be filled from these registers. ARS will now distribute monthly vacancy listings containing a brief description of duties for each vacancy, selective placement factors, and the location of the position. Candidates will apply for a specific position and eligibility will be limited to consideration for that position. ARS subject matter specialists will rate and rank candidates and ARS will issue the CSC Certificate. Continuing registers will not be established. The first announcement under the revised procedures will probably be issued in September. Non-research positions in Life Sciences below GS-13 will continue to be filled through procedures under Announcement No. 421.

Effective July 1, all GS-13 through GS-15 positions formerly under the Life Sciences Announcement were placed under coverage of Announcement No. 408, Senior Level Position. (Contact: F. Longen, ARS, ext. 68100)

NEWS FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.....

- ...Mandatory Retirement at 70 - CSC Chairman Campbell has urged repeal of the law requiring Federal employees with 15 years' Federal service to retire at age 70, and will soon send Congress repeal legislation. Removing the mandatory age would have minimal effect on personnel management since only 1.2% of the Federal work force is over 64 and there is a marked trend toward early retirement.
- ...General Schedule Pay Cap-Public Law 95-66 of July 11, will cap the October 1977 General Schedule pay comparability increase at \$47,500. The bill provides that members of Congress and others (including the Executive Schedule), whose salaries were increased earlier this year pursuant to the Quadrennial Commission recommendations, will not get the next comparability pay adjustment.
- ...Agencies Have Authority to Give Exams - CSC recently approved in principle an experiment in which certain agencies may be delegated authority to give examinations and maintain registers. (See "ARS Receives Examining Authority for Life Sciences Positions" in this issue) The experiment will involve: (1) selected technical occupations for which the agency is the sole or predominant user and (2) jobs in agencies in isolated locations.

(Source: Administrator's Alert, Civil Service Commission, August 1977)

REGIONAL OFFICE CIVIL RIGHTS COORDINATOR.....On January 3, the Department of Justice issued new regulations establishing policy for Civil Rights compliance in all Federally funded programs. To facilitate this responsibility and to achieve compliance with these regulations, FNS is establishing a full-time Civil Rights Coordinator's position in each of its Regional Offices. The Coordinator will be attached to the Regional Administrator's Office and will assist the regional staff in carrying out civil rights responsibility. The Regional Offices are responsible for monitoring State compliance with Title VI Civil Rights requirements. (Contact: Herbert Scurlock, FNS, ext. 78410)

PRESIDENT SIGNS FISCAL YEAR 1978 APPROPRIATION BILL.....On Friday, August 12, 1977, the President signed Public Law 95-97, making appropriations for Agriculture and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1978. (Contact: Bobby Barham, OBPE, ext. 76176)

USDA TELECOMMUNICATIONS BRIEFING.....Phase II of the Department's telecommunications study will be completed by September 1. Briefings for agencies will be held that month. (Contact: Bob Head, ADS, ext. 77543)

PURCHASE OF ADP EQUIPMENT RESULTS IN COST SAVINGS.....GSA is providing ADS with funds from the GSA ADPE fund for the purchase of disk drives and controllers used in NOCC. There is a savings of \$298,894 over the system life by purchasing this equipment. (Contact: Ed Stalder, ADS, ext. 74239)

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM.....Agencies have provided written comments on procedures proposed by OO and NFC for obtaining information about personal property procured through purchase orders (AD-838). Issues were discussed at a meeting conducted by OO with property and procurement managers on June 29 and another package of proposed reports and input documents was submitted for agency comment. With continued agency cooperation, it will be possible to meet the target date of August 31 for a complete requirements package covering the personal property subsystem. (Contact: Frank DiGialleonardo, OO, ext. 73152)

FEDERAL PROCUREMENT INSTITUTE (FPI).....The FPI is establishing a Task Analysis Interagency Specialized Work Group (ISWG) to participate with the FPI and the Air Force Occupational Measurement Center (OMC) in an analysis of the Federal government procurement work force. Individuals will be interviewed, questionnaires will be distributed and task inventories established. Completion date for this analysis is January 30, 1979. (Contact: Lacy Arnold, OO, ext. 77527)

NEW APPOINTMENT.....

...AMS - Barbara L. Schlei, a Los Angeles attorney, has been appointed Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Ms. Schlei has been with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Washington, D. C. and Los Angeles, California since 1965. Previous to that she was an assistant U.S. Attorney in the United States Attorney's Office in Washington, D. C., and an associate in a New York City law firm. (Contact: Joe Logan, OP, ext. 77131)

OMB CIRCULAR NO. A-110.....USDA regulations to implement A-110 (Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations) are now in final clearance with publication scheduled within the next 60 days. Agencies will have six months to issue their own regulations after publication. (Contact: Art Langer, OO, ext. 77527)

DEPARTMENTAL TEXT EDITING SYSTEM.....Text editing and photocomposition needs have been the subject of intensive study culminating in the Photocomposition Task Force report presented over a year ago. On August 9, Acting Assistant Secretary King approved the recommendation by OO and COMM to purchase a Departmental Text Editing System. Funds are available in the FY 1977 Working Capital Fund to purchase the equipment which will be located in OO. GPO is providing an electronics specialist to assist in completing development of the specifications. (Contact: Al Cauley, OO, ext. 72815)

1977 SAVINGS BONDS CAMPAIGN.....This is an update on our "final" report that appeared in the last issue of the newsletter. This, then, is the final, final report.

USDA has achieved 75 percent participation in the 1977 Savings Bonds Campaign and a total of nine agencies have met or surpassed our participation goal of 80 percent.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Total Number of New Allotments</u>	<u>Total Number of Allotment Increases</u>	<u>Percent Participation</u>	
			<u>Beginning</u>	<u>Ending</u>
OALJ	1	0	41	47
AMS	137	69	75	79
ARS	357	271	62	66
ASCS	242	182	67	77
APHIS	632	434	61	65
OA	58	46	67	77
ADS	24	34	57	63
COMM	23	5	45	58
CSRS	11	3	56	68
EMSC	27	19	61	82
ERS	90	84	60	69
OEO	8	7	50	59
ES	6	11	58	61
FCS	9	4	81	92
FmHA	639	291	88	97
FCIC	82	69	84	98
FGIS	336	34	33	66
FNS	407	254	71	89
FAS	56	20	54	66
FS	1,204	529	64	70
OGC	12	19	54	58
OGSM	6	10	68	74
OI	51	8	53	67
OMF	13	16	65	74
NAL	7	7	61	66
NFC	280	95	68	98
OO	33	13	62	72
P&SA	14	15	75	81
OP	13	7	49	61
RDS	7	4	53	77
REA	84	64	67	79
SEC	19	?	54	80
SCS	807	431	73	79
SRS	165	80	69	84
USDA TOTAL	5,860	3,139	67	75

(Contact: Frank Gearde, Jr., FNS, ext. 78974)